

AMENDMENT

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 3, 14 and 15 as follows:

B<sup>1</sup>  
1. (Amended) A method for preparing a non-human animal for screening for agents that modulate tolerance to an immunogen comprising the steps of preparing a nucleic acid directing expression of said immunogen, and exogenously delivering said nucleic acid to the liver of said animal by portal vein injection, under conditions that result in the sustained expression of the immunogen in the liver thereby inducing immunological tolerance to said immunogen.

B<sup>2</sup>  
2. (Amended) A method for preparing a non-human animal for screening for agents that modulate tolerance to an immunogen comprising delivering said immunogen to the liver of said animal by portal vein injection under conditions that result in sustained presence of said immunogen thereby inducing immunological tolerance to said immunogen, and wherein said delivery is not by expression of a nucleic acid present in the germline of said animal.

B<sup>3</sup>  
3. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said screening is for agents that modulate tolerance to a viral immunogen, and said animal is tolerant to said viral immunogen.

4. (Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein said screening is for agents that modulate tolerance to a viral immunogen, and said animal is tolerant to said viral immunogen.

Please cancel claims 8 and 9, without prejudice and without disclaimer.

CLAIMS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION

1. (Amended) A method for preparing a non-human animal for screening for agents that modulate tolerance to an immunogen comprising the steps of preparing a nucleic acid directing expression of said immunogen, and exogenously delivering said nucleic acid to the liver of said animal by portal vein injection, under conditions that result in the sustained expression of the immunogen in the liver thereby inducing immunological tolerance to said immunogen.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the nucleic acid is packaged in an adeno-associated virus particle.
3. (Amended) A method for preparing a non-human animal for screening for agents that modulate tolerance to an immunogen comprising delivering said immunogen to the liver of said animal by portal vein injection under conditions that result in sustained presence of said immunogen thereby inducing immunological tolerance to said immunogen, and wherein said delivery is not by expression of a nucleic acid present in the germline of said animal.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the immunogen is a HCV immunogen.
5. The method of claim 3, wherein the immunogen is a HCV immunogen.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the animal is a rodent.
7. The method of claim 3, wherein the animal is a rodent.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the immunogen is the NS5a protein of HCV.
11. The method of claim 3, wherein the immunogen is the NS5a protein of HCV.

12. A non-human animal for screening for agents that modulate tolerance to an immunogen prepared by the method of claim 1, wherein said animal is tolerant to said immunogen.

13. A non-human animal for screening for agents that modulate tolerance to an immunogen prepared by the method of claim 3, wherein said animal is tolerant to said immunogen.

14. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said screening is for agents that modulate tolerance to a viral immunogen, and said animal is tolerant to said viral immunogen.

15. (Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein said screening is for agents that modulate tolerance to a viral immunogen, and said animal is tolerant to said viral immunogen.

41. A method for preparing a non-human animal for screening for agents that modulate tolerance to an immunogen comprising delivering a nucleic acid directing expression of said immunogen to the liver of said animal, under conditions that result in the sustained expression of the immunogen in the liver, provided that said nucleic acid is not present in the germline of said animal.